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No. _____

U.S. NEWS ILLUSTRATED: 1920's

The 1920's have been called "The Roaring Twenties", "The Jazz Age", "The Fabulous Decade" and "The Era of Wonderful Nonsense". It was all of these and more.

When the Great War ended in 1918, Americans were determined to forget about the horrors of war by enjoying themselves as much as possible. The United States turned its back on the rest of the world and began two decades of drifting. They hoped to find meaning in making fortunes, having fun and living out fantasies.

President Calvin Coolidge said in 1925, "The business of America is business." American businesses boomed during the twenties. It was a decade devoted to the making and spending of money. The only goal was to make a profit. Business leaders became national heroes. But the seeds of selfishness planted during the twenties would reap a bitter harvest during the Great Depression of the thirties.

ASSIGNMENT: Many large circulation magazines started publication in the 1920's. Some of the most popular magazines included Vogue, Life, New Yorker and Time. These magazines printed illustrations to depict the changes in culture and lifestyle that were sweeping across America.

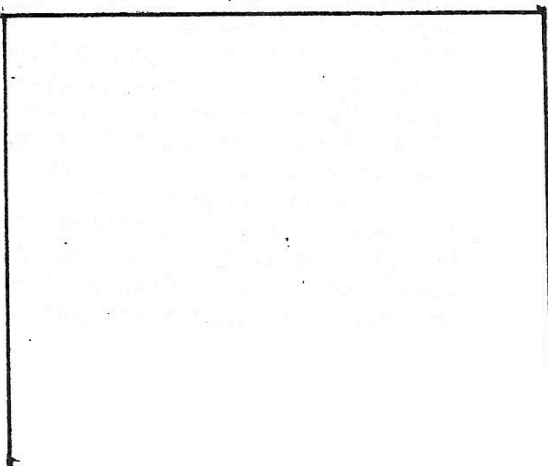
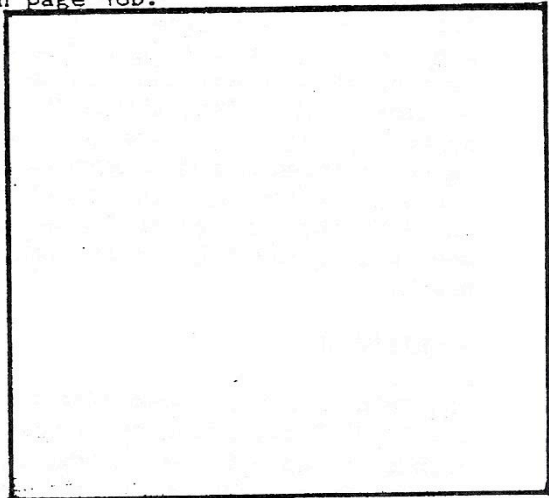
Pretend that you are an illustrator working for the make-believe magazine U.S. NEWS ILLUSTRATED. You have been assigned to draw the magazine covers for the next 8 issues. Your editor has given you a brief description of each topic to be covered. Read each summary and draw a magazine cover to illustrate the topic. Be sure to use color to make the cover more attractive. When you have finished the 8 posters, complete the questions on page 46D.

RADIO

The nation's first radio station, KDKA in Pittsburgh, began broadcasting in 1920. By 1925, 30 million listeners were tuned in. Almost every family could afford a "wireless". They could enjoy music, sports, plays, news and speeches in the privacy of their homes. Two favorite comedies were Amos 'n Andy and Fibber McGee and Molly. By mid-decade, advertisers were sponsoring these programs to promote their products.

MOTION PICTURES

Films were silent with a piano player providing the background music. "Newsreels" were shown before the main feature. Most every large city had a large, fancy theater called "dream palaces". Hollywood, California became the movie capital due to its sunny weather. The most famous star was Charlie Chaplin as the "Little Tramp." The "talkies" began in 1927 with the release of The Jazz Age, starring Al Jolson. One year later, Mickey Mouse made his first film called "Steamboat Willie."



AGE OF HEROES

Sports stars became heroes. Babe Ruth hit a record 60 home runs in 1927. Red Grange, "The Galloping Ghost of Illinois" scored 5 touchdowns in one game. In 1926, 120,000 fans paid \$2.5 million to watch heavyweight boxers Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney. Tennis stars Bill Tilden and Helen Wills and golfers Bobby Jones and Walter Hagen became sport legends. Johnny Weismuller set many swimming records and Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim the English Channel. But the greatest hero of the age was Charles Lindbergh. In 1927, he became the first person to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. He flew his plane, The Spirit of St. Louis, from New York to Paris in 33 and 1/2 hours.

AUTOMOBILES

Henry Ford put America on wheels in 1908. He organized a mass production system using a moving assembly line. Each worker performed the same task all day long. An entire car could be built in 2 hours. The auto industry gave birth to new industries - service stations, garages, rubber, plate glass and tourism. Automobiles, called "tin lizzies", became the symbol of the 20's. Cars gave people a sense of freedom and independence. They could go places they never had before. In 1925, the Ford Model T cost about \$300 and came in any color - as long as it was black.

PROHIBITION

The 18th Amendment took effect on January 16, 1920. Prohibition outlawed alcoholic drinks in the U.S. Gangsters, like Al Capone, made fortunes in "bootlegging" - supplying illegal alcohol. Some people made homemade alcohol called "bathtub gin". But thousands of otherwise honest citizens broke the law by visiting illegal taverns called "speakeasies". Chicago alone had 10,000 worth \$100 million a year. Competition between rival gangs over bootlegging often turned violent. The most famous incident, the St. Valentines Day Massacre, was planned by Al Capone to wipe out his rival, Bugs Moran. Prohibition ended in 1933 when the 21st Amendment was passed.

FLAMING YOUTH

Many young people rebelled in the 20's. They were determined to dress and behave differently than their parents. Older, more conservative adults called them a "lost generation". Some young women, called "flappers", wore short hair, short skirts, loose-fitting blouses and make-up. They smoked and drank in public and went on dates without chaperones. They listened to "jazz" music and danced the "Charleston". Jazz became the most popular music of the 20's. It began among black musicians in New Orleans. The music was not written down, but improvised-made up as the band played. It grew out of the "blues" with a syncopated rhythm. Two of the most famous jazz musicians were Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong and pianist Jelly Roll Morton.

APPLIANCES

Many new household appliances were introduced during the 20's. The vacuum cleaner, gas oven, electric refrigerator and washing machine became common in American homes. These items made routine chores faster and easier to do for American housewives. It also increased the amount of leisure time available to enjoy recreational activities. Many women went back to school to earn college degrees. The number of women in the work force increased. Buying on credit was first introduced in the 20's. The installment plan made it possible to "buy now, pay later." Luxury items like automobiles, phonographs and radios gradually became "necessities." American enjoyed a period of prosperity it had not experienced before.

FADS AND FOLLY

Americans took part in many crazy contests and stunts during the 20's. Kissing contests, crossword puzzles, marathon dancing, goldfish swallowing and flagpole sitting were some of the fads sweeping across the country. The aim in marathon dancing was to keep dancing longer than other couples. One contest lasted for over 100 days. "Shipwreck" Kelly set a record for sitting atop a flagpole 50 feet off the ground for 23 days and 7 hours. A transcontinental footrace was run between Los Angeles to New York. It took 84 days for the winner to cross the finish line. Nonsense songs, silly sayings and raccoon coats were part of the folly. She was the "cat's pajamas" with her "jazzbo" boyfriend riding in his Model T. "Hot diggety dog!"

PART 1: FACTS

1. The original name for the radio.
2. He said, "The business of America is business."
3. The most famous dance of the "Roaring Twenties."
4. He developed the moving assembly line in mass production.
5. Secret, illegal nightclubs where alcohol was served.
6. She became the first woman to swim the English Channel.
7. Another name for large, beautiful movie theaters in the 20's.
8. The world record holder for flagpole sitting during the 20's.
9. The credit system where consumers "buy now, pay later."
10. The name given to homemade alcoholic beverages.
11. The constitutional Amendment that made alcohol illegal in the U.S.
12. The name for young, unconventional women of the 20's.
13. The most famous baseball star of the "Jazz Age."
14. The star of the talking picture "Steamboat Willie."
15. A gangland slaying in Chicago ordered by Al Capone in 1929.
16. A famous football star at the University of Illinois.
17. The supplying of illegal alcoholic drinks by gangs in the 20's.
18. A slang expression for automobiles in the "Fabulous Decade."
19. The plane used in the first successful flight across the Atlantic.
20. The name given to the first sound pictures.
21. The greatest hero in an age of heroes.
22. The constitutional Amendment that made alcohol legal again.
23. The most popular form of music of the "Era of Wonderful Nonsense."
24. The term used by older Americans to describe young people.
25. The most famous comedian of silent movies.

PART 2: OPINIONS

1. Would you have liked to have lived during the 1920's? Explain your answer.

2. Describe some of the changes in American culture and lifestyle which began in the 1920's and are still having an impact on our society today.
